WESTERN KANSAS WORLD

Yearly Subscription $2.00 | STOCK FARMING THE BASIS OF OUR INDUSTRIES. | Single Copy 5 Cents

ELEVENTH YEAR. | WA-KEENEY, KANSAS, SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1889. | NUMBER 26.

WHEN I KNOCK AT YOUR DOOR.

When I knock at your door, May Belle, dearest,
Though I know you are gracious and kind,
And your friendship has grown the sincerest,
Three things will come up in my mind,
I think of the night I once knocked there,
The time that still makes my heart ache,
When I got a great backset and shock there
By kissing your ma by mistake.

When I knock at your door, May Belle, darling,
I recall how I went there to win,
But the bull dog behind me came snarling,
And I, without knocking, bulged in,
In the dark I encountered your father,
Who thought me a burglar, no doubt,
And without any questions or bother,
Ere I could explain, kicked me out.

When I knock at your door, May Belle, dearest,
Though I know that to me they're resigned,
And you love me with heart the sincerest,
Three things will come up in my mind;
Three thoughts which I never can smother
Fill my head with a racket and roar,
Yourself, and your father and mother,
May Belle, dear, when I knock at your door.
—*Yankee Blade.*

A FORTUNATE RUNAWAY.

BY M. E. C.

"The Ghost" was an old white horse. He's made up of bones and sinews, and, I s'pose, was the ghost of his former self," May said, when she first saw him browsing in the pasture.

"The Ghost" he was called, by all the children, from that time on.

Aunt Phœbe was "Silas' widder," Grandmother Brown would have told you.

Although ten years older than Silas, she had persuaded him to marry her when he was barely 21, and ill with consumption. It was hardly to be expected that his father and mother should approve.

Old Mr. Brown did not live many years after his son's marriage and death.

Grandmother Brown was a quite, gentle, home-loving body, an excellent housekeeper and "proper good helpmeet"—as her husband always said; but she was as helpless as a baby about settling the estate, and Aaron, her only surviving child, was but a boy of 12, so Phœbe—who was a shrewd, unprincipled woman—settled it mostly into her own hands.

Since then old Mrs. Brown and her boy, as she still called him, had seen many hard times.

Aaron Brown was not calculated to get along well in the world, though he was a steady, hard-working man. He toiled away on the little, rocky farm, and his wife helped him as best she could, bearing all the necessary privations patiently.

She was a sweet, lady-like looking woman, with pretty, pink cheeks, and light-brown hair brushed smoothly back. She wore neat, calico dresses, often faded and patched.

Grandmother Brown thought she looked like a beautiful Madonna; but Aunt Phœbe always said: "Harriet has no style."

Anna once overheard the remark and repeated it to May.

"Style, indeed!" the child indignantly exclaimed; "I hope I'm thankful mamma does not look like her, if that's style. Look at her old freckled face, and her little, snapping black eyes, and dyed hair, all sticky with the horrid, dirty-smelling stuff she puts on it. She needn't thing she looks so fine, with those gold spectacles hanging half way down her nose. They'd drop off if her nose didn't turn up so at the end. I know she wears silk dresses, and has new bonnets every time she comes—often enough that is, too—and mamma never has any new things, but she always looks nice, and Aunt Phœbe looks like the very old cat."

"Don't say 'the old cat.' May; it sounds awful. Mamma don't like to have you say it. Aunt Phœbe wouldn't look half so funny if she didn't wear such queer colors, and the biggest of everything. Her bustle is 'most as big as she is, and her bonnet pokes up higher'n any other bonnet in the meeting-house, and it is such a bright green; and then that purple dress and scarlet parasol! Such parasols are not for old women; I know they are not. The boys on the meeting-house steps laugh when she goes in. I don't blame them, either."

Annie loved soft, subdued colors, quiet tones, and quiet ways.

The children were playing up in their own room, one afternoon, in early summer.

"Did the stage stop here, Annie? I thought I heard it. Do look and see if any one has come."

Annie was on her knees on the floor, close under the small dormer window, putting her dolls to bed. She finished tucking them in and stooped to kiss their faces and say: "Good night, you dear children. Be good while mamma's gone," before she raised her head, and pushed back the curtain to look out. Annie was never in a hurry.

May was standing on the bed at the other side of the room, trying to fasten a patch-work quilt across one end of a steamboat berth. They were going to play take a journey on the steamboat; as neither of them had ever taken such a journey they had no very clear idea how to arrange a berth.

"It stopped, yes; but I can't see who it is. They are in under the porch now. Oh, my goodness!" in a tone of dismay. "It's Aunt Phœbe, that's who it is. I see her big trunk on the back of the stage. The driver's just unstrapping it. What shall we do?"

"Grin and bear it, I s'pose—just as we always have to," pouted May, as she dropped the blankets.

"I could cry if I wasn't so provoked with her. We'll have to stop playing now and go down and do something for her—she's always coming and spoiling all our fun."

Everyone in the house felt just as the children did about the visitor, though no one else was quite so frank and outspoken in regard to the unexpected arrival.

If the grandmother had heard the conversation she would have said: "Hush, hush, children! Don't speak like that;" but she looked anxious and worried herself when she heard the loud, harsh voice of "Silas's widder" at the door.

You must not think that they were inhospitable people. They were not that; they were only poor. Aunt Phœbe had but recently made them a long visit. She was not expected again so soon.

Old Mrs. Brown anxiously whispered: "What in the world shall we get for supper, Harriet? There's nothing in the house but a little rye bread and milk, and Phœbe won't touch that."

"Yes there is, mother. There is a quarter of a pound of tea I bought for you—I knew you ought to have tea, and there is a very little wheat flour. I can make quick biscuit enough for Phœbe; and there is some current jam, and a little butter. I'm glad I saved it out. Phœbe never thinks she can get along without butter, as we have to, so much of the time."

The Browns had to sell all the butter they could make to pay for what they needed from the store.

Though Mrs. Brown had planned one meal for her visitor, she sighed wearily when she thought of the many others to be planned before the visit was ended. Aunt Phœbe never stayed less than six weeks.

They were just now more than usually pinched, trying to scrape together money enough to pay for a horse.

The children were in the habit of helping their father on the farm. They were delighted to own a horse. May, who, though the younger, took the lead in everything, was not long in learning to drive. They had very little time for play, but they never seemed to mind it except when Aunt Phœbe was there. She sent them on so many errands that the little play they had was sadly interrupted.

As soon as Aunt Phœbe heard of the horse she said: "Now, brother Aaron, I want you should have the children take me, t'morrer, out to Uncle Joseph's to spend the afternoon. I'm so glad you've got a horse, so I can go more when I'm here. So many folks feel hurt 'cause I don't visit 'em oftener. I know Aunt Sarah 'll be dretful glad t' see me, and May's a real 'cute little driver, I just saw her driving into the yard."

Mr. Brown had intended to use the horse to cultivate corn; but he had learned long ago that yielding to Phœbe's wishes was the only path to peace, and he knew what a relief it would be to his wife and mother to have her out of the way, so he did not think of refusing her the use of the horse—though he felt very sorry for his little girls. He knew that they would have a trying afternoon.

May's sunny face clouded when she heard what they must do. She had expected to ride the horse for her father to cultivate corn. She always enjoyed that. The birds sang so joyously out on the hillside, and she could look off over the green, cool-looking mowing-lot to the pretty gurgling brook, fringed with ferns, and sweet-flag, and mint.

"Never mind, May," Annie whispered, "it will be ever so much nicer than having to run all over town for her on our own feet, as we have always had to be fore."

"How do we know it will be any easier to drive to suit her than 'tis to do anything else?"

"I wonder you didn't buy a decent-looking horse whilst you was about it, Aaron," Aunt Phœbe remarked, as she climbed into the back seat of the long wagon. She was a tall, large woman.

"The Ghost" walked slowly out, as was his habit at starting.

"Do 'tend to your drivin', child, and make that horse go, can't you?"

May took the whip and switched him a little. He gave a sudden start and went a trifle faster.

"There, May Brown! I won't have that! Don't you whip him again; he'll run away and throw us all out, just as sure as you do it!"

May did not venture to whip him again, but she was reprimanded none the less for that. If he went fast, it was "There now! You'll drive this horse to death, 'fore your poor father ever gets him paid for, too. It's a sin for a child to act so." If he went more slowly, it was, "Now, May Brown, don't you let this horse creep along so; they ain't no sense in it. I know I could make him go good."

At last she said: "Well, I can't stand your tricks no longer. I'd rather trust Annie. Annie, you drive."

The child meekly obeyed, and, in her nervousness, gave a sharp twitch which started up the horse.

"There! What're you up to now? Drive slower."

They were on the brow of a long hill, and "The Ghost" was not disposed to go slowly just there. Annie could not stop him at once.

Aunt Phœbe became more and more angry, until at last she stood up, holding in one hand the bright scarlet parasol so obnoxious to Annie's eyes, and attempted to grasp the reins herself. She succeeded only in giving one line a quick, sharp pull.

Now "The Ghost," all unknown to his present owners, had been, in his youth, a fiery steed much given to hasty flights over the roads—when anything occurred that he did not exactly understand.

That flaming red thing towering over his head, and the sharp strong pull on one line acted on him like a draught from the fountain of youth. He instantly turned to the right and flew over the ground like a young colt.

Annie and May were thrown out into the swamp and well covered with black mud but uninjured.

They picked themselves up and crawled out to the road, two sorrowful little maidens, with their pretty, cheap sun-hats all crushed and broken, their light calico dresses light no longer, their wavy, brown hair matted with mud, and their hands and faces covered with it.

"Papa says some people believe in mud baths," said Annie, with doleful amusement, "but I don't."

"Papa'll want to put us in the cornfield to scare the crows away," laughed May.

"We look funny enough, I'm sure, but do look at Aunt Phœbe! Oh, it's enough to make the bushes laugh!"

"I s'pose 'The Ghost' is running away. I never saw a runaway horse before."

"Do you believe he'll upset her and break the wagon? What would father do without the wagon?"

Annie was half crying—thinking what a loss it would be to her father—when May broke out in merry, ringing laughter.

"The Ghost" was flying over the crest of hill. He would soon be out of sight.

Aunt Phœbe had dropped the lines and was clinging for dear life to the back seat of the wagon. The crooked end of her long-handled parasol had caught in some fold of her dress and streamed out behind like a fiery banner; the green bonnet would have gone long before, like John Gilpin's hat and wig, had it not been tied under her chin; it had slipped from her head and fluttered after her like a great green parrot; her greenish-blue, changeable silk shawl puffed out with wind like a gigantic soap-bubble.

Altogether it was, as quiet Annie remarked, "enough to make the bushes laugh."

"The Ghost" had taken a lonely road—as ghosts do. There were few houses and they met no one who could stop the horse.

Some children playing by the roadside, ran in to say, "Oh, ma! there's a circus woman comin'! Look quick, quick!"

Long after she had passed they gazed down the road expecting to see the elephant following.

A boy, killing potato bugs in a field, looked up when he heard the clattering of the wagon, and cried: "Good lordy massy! Ef it ain't Aaron Brown's 'Ghost' runnin' away! Got some crazy critter in there, too. Wall, 'tain't s'prizin' that he sh'd run like that with sech a woman in behind."

With wide-open mouth and eyes he watched them out of sight.

An old man hoeing corn over on a hill-top caught a glimpse of the strange apparation, with his dim, blurred eyes, and exclaimed: "What on airth is it? Is the Day o' Jedgment comin'? Looks like er fiery chari't. I do' know but the end o' the world's nigh. I mus' git home t' my ole woman."

He hastened down the hill to his house, where he was met with angry exclamations from that same old woman.

"See it! Yis, I saw it," she sneered. "Nothin' in the worl' but er horse runnin' erway with er woman—not 'fore her senses hed run erway with her, 'nuther. I do' know but the worl' is comin' to an end when wimmen—ole wimmen, too—are so full o' pride and vanity 't they rig theirsel's out like that—scarin' ole horses an' ole men both out o' their senses—ef they ever had any."

On and on they went, Aunt Phœbe holding fast to the seat, making no attempt to drive, but every little while shouting, "Whoa! whoa!"

Her shrill voice mingled with the loud clattering noise of the rickety wagon only frightened the horse and made him run the faster.

Just as he was getting considerably calmed down, Aunt Phœbe's courage revived. She held to the seat with one hand, gathered up the lines with the other, and again pulled one line—around they whirled.

The shafts were broken, and the wagon turned over, and Aunt Phœbe landed in a tobacco field over the fence.

"The Ghost"—freed from that rattling thing behind him—stopped and waited.

Aunt Phœbe called lustily for help.

Farmer Jones and his men, working at the other end of the field, witnessed the catastrophe and came quickly to her aid.

Fortunately no bones were broken, though she was somewhat bruised. The green bonnet was flattened and the scarlet parasol had "outlived its usefulness," as one of the men remarked when he picked it up. Her shawl was in rags, her bustle twisted around on one side, and her nose bloody.

"She looks like er game rooster thet's hed the wurst uv er fight," one of the boys said, as he glanced over his shoulder at her.

Farmer Jones was helping her into the house and saying, "Mighty lucky, madam, that you was near a house. You come right in and make yourself as comfortable 's you can. They ain't no woman here to help you fix up the damages, I am sorry to say. I'm er lone man. You won't find everything shipshape; I ain't a master hand at housekeepin'. My wife was, though. I lost her 'bout a year ago. Yis, I lost her."

He took out a soiled handkerchief and wiped his eyes.

Aunt Phœbe looked at him keenly before she said, "I'm a widder, I know how t' sympathize with you."

The broken shafts were tied up and one of the men sent home with the horse and wagon. "The Ghost" looked weary and woe-begone enough after his unaccustomed exercise.

After dark Farmer Jones drove up to Aaron Brown's. He was in a fine carriage driving a pair of handsome, black horses. Aunt Phœbe sat by his side arrayed in one of his late wife's bonnets. She was no longer "Silas's Widder." They had stopped at the minister's on the way.

She came for her clothes, and to say "good-by."

She had made her last long visit at "Brother Aaron's."

May whispered to Annie, "Now we can have peace, and time to play. I just love 'The Ghost' for spilling her over into that man's tobacco field."

When they were alone together, Mr. Brown said to his wife: "Harriet, it was a mighty lucky day for us when we bought 'The Ghost.'"

FOUR things come not back: the spoken word, the sped arrow, the past life, the neglected opportunity.

AN ORTHODOX MAN.

He Wouldn't Give the Lightning Any Chance to Do Business.

A man wearing the evidences of a tiresome journey dismounted from a jaded horse at the door of a cabin near the Arkansas line of the Indian Territory, and, speaking to an old fellow who advanced to meet him, said:

"My friend, I am worn out and am hungry. Can you give me shelter and something to eat?"

The old fellow picked up a wood tick out of his whiskers, and looking at it, answered:

"I dunno 'zackly, but we mout, as sich things have been did. Whut's yo' name?"

"Marcus White."

"Ah, hah! They call you Mark, I reckon?"

"Yes."

"Wall, my name, is Matthew, an' I've got a son named Luke and one named John. All uv us tergether would make a sort of gospel team, wouldn't we?"

"Yes," said Mr. White, smiling, "but the question now is, can I find accommodation here?"

"Hitch yo' horse an' come in, an' we'll see about it."

When White went into the house a shrunken woman, mumbling over her knitting, made room for him by shoving back her chair without getting up, and a jute-haired child, with a hunk of corn bread in its hand, scrambled under the bed.

"Set down, Mr. Mark," said old Matthew. "Tildy, (addressing his wife) "you mout hussle around now an' git this here hongry man suthin' ter eat. You mout go out thar an' kill that old hen that's been a-settin' fur two weeks on them pieces uv brickbats. Bile her long enough an' I reckon we ken chaw her."

The woman wiped her nose on her knitting and went out, and pretty soon there arose the distressing cry of an old hen.

"Mr. Mark," said old Matthew, "you are religious I hope."

"Yes, I try to be."

"Glad ter hear it, fur nobody but religious folks can claim anything offen me. You believe that Aaron made a steer outen gold, don't you?"

"Yes, a calf."

"Air you shore it was a ca'f?"

"I am quite sure."

"Wall, then, we won't argy. All I want is ter settle the fack uv yo' belief, fur, ez I tell you, I am a religious man, dyed in the wool an' baptized in the feathers. You believe that old 'Lisha made the he-bears eat up forty children, don't you?"

"They were she bears."

"Air you certain about that p'int?"

"Yes, I am positive."

"Wall, it don't make no diffunce so long as you believe it. Now, lemme see. It's my habit, you understand, to investigate these things. I wouldn't let a inferdel stay in my house five minutes, if I knowed it, fur nothin' in the world. You believe that Moses split the sea, don't you?"

"Yes."

"Glad—glad to know that you air a Christian gentleman. But I hear my boys Luke and John a-comin.' They've been over inter Bucksnort County ter settle a little diffikelty."

When the boys, two gaunt fellows, came into the room the old man said: "Boys, this is Mr. Mark. Set down thar, an' tell me how the thing come out. Did you find old man Bender?"

"Yas suh," said one of the boys.

"Whut did you do with him?"

"Tied him ter a tree."

"Good! Then what did you do?"

"We cut some hickories an' whipped him"

"Good!" the old man exclaimed. "Did he howl?"

"Bawled like er cow,"

"Good! How many did you hit him?"

"Fifty."

"Fustrate. Then what?"

"We left him tied thar.

"Fustrate, Mr. Mark," he added, speaking to the guest, "that oughter teach him a lesson."

"What had he done to deserve such punishment?"

"Oh, he sued me for a saddle I borrid from him. Left him tied, eh? Fustrate!"

They continued to talk, and the odor of the boiling hen floated into the room. A gathering cloud which all day had been making threats burst into a downpour of rain.

"Mr. Mark," said the host, "I wanter ax you another question. We must have a little liberality, yoo know, ez well ez belief. Do you b'l've that Adam was made outer dust?"

"Well, strictly speaking I do not."

"What! don't believe that Adam was made outer dust?"

"To tell you the truth, I do not."

"Well, then, git outer this house right smart; get right out."

"My dear sir, this rainstorm——"

"Git out (springing to his feet) or I'll hurt you. I don't want the lightnin' ter strike my house jest because I've got a inferdel here. Git out."

"Won't you give me a piece of that chicken, please?"

"Not a speck. I ain't gwine to give the lightnin' the slighest excuse for business. No inferdel harbored here. Git!"

Mr. Marcus White rode into the storm.—*Arkansaw Traveler.*

A Novel Religious Custom.

All over Siberia, writes George Kennan, it is the custom of the natives when they cross the top of a high hill or mountain to make a propriatory offering to the spirits of storm and tempest. In the extreme northeastern part of Siberia these offerings consist generally of tobacco and are thrown out on the ground in front of some prominent and noticeable rock; but in the Trans-Baikal the Buriats and Mongols are accustomed to pile a heap of stones beside the road, erect thereon half a dozen rods or poles and suspend from the latter small pieces of their clothing. Every pious traveler who passes a shrine of this sort on the summit of a mountain is expected to alight from his vehicle or dismount from his horse, tear off a little piece of his kaftan or his shirt, hang it up on one of these poles and say a prayer. As a result of this ceremonial, every shrine presents to the traveler a sort of tailor's collection of scraps and remnants of cloth of every conceivable kind, quality, and color, fluttering to the wind from slender poles that look like hastily improved fishing rods. Theoretically this custom would seem to be not wholly without its advantages. If a native was familiar with the clothing of his friends he could always tell by a simple inspection of one of these shrines who had lately passed that way, and, if necessary, he could trace any particular person from hilltop to hilltop by the stripes of his shirt or the frayed edges of his trousers left hanging on the stone-ballasted fishing rods as an offering to the mighty gods of the Siberian tempests.

In practice, however, this might not be feasible, unless one could remember all the old clothes of the person whom one wished to trace, and all the ancestral rags and tatters of that person's family. From a careful examination that we made of a number of shrines we became convinced that every pious Buriat keeps a religious ragbag, which he carries with him when he travels, and to which he has recourse whenever it becomes necessary to decorate the sacred fishing poles of the storm gods. I am sure that such miserable, decayed scraps and tatters of raiment as we saw fluttering in the wind over the shrines between Selenginsk and Kiakhta never could have been cut or torn from any garments that were actually in wear.

Kisses Without Thrills.

"Didn't that fellow Brown kiss you in the hallway when he went out? asked Mrs. Jones of her daughter as the outer door closed upon the evening's caller and the mother leaned over the baluster above.

"No, he didn't," was the reply, and there was a suspicion of regret in the answer.

"I thought I saw him," insisted the old lady, "and I thought I heard him."

"So you did, but he didn't kiss me. He just merely smacked my bang, and that wasn't me—was it, now? He may have meant to salute me chastely on the forehead, or impart a respectful token upon my suburn tresses, but what he did do was to kiss a false front piece of hair that had grown heaven knows where! He might have kissed a piece of kid skin—like Smith did in the ante-room of our opera box the other night. He lifted my gloved hand gingerly, touched his lips gingerly to it, and might as well have kissed the sole of my shoe for all the thrill there was to it.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

MAMMA—You must not eat any more candy, Flossie; it will injure your teeth. Flossie—How long will it be before I can take my teeth out like grandma does?—*Omaha World.*